

DIALOGUE

REVIEW FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN ARAB AND JEWISH ACTIVISTS OF PALESTINE

IN DEFENCE OF THE RIGHT OF RETURN, FOR THE ONE STATE SOLUTION
END OF TERM REPORT PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH, ARABIC, HEBREW AND FRENCH

למען זכות השיבה
של הפליטים הפלסטינים
ולמען מדינה אחת על פני שטחה
ההיסטורי של פלסטין כולה

من اجل حق عودة
اللاجئين الفلسطينيين
من اجل دولة واحدة على
اراضي فلسطين التاريخية

IN DEFENCE OF THE PALESTINIAN
REFUGEES' RIGHT OF RETURN
FOR A SINGLE STATE
ON THE WHOLE TERRITORY
OF HISTORIC PALESTINE

MARCH 2008

International Conference - April 2008

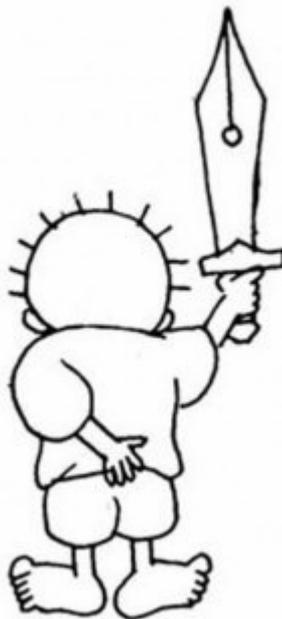
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Hanthala, by Naji al Ali

Introduction

The events that took place recently in Gaza lead us to reprint what we wrote two months ago while preparing for the Madrid conference, “After 1993, many people believe that the proposal to establish two states on the lands of Palestine would bring peace. Since 1993, the situation of the Palestinian people has not stopped its deterioration.” Today we see a new picture.

On January 23, the Palestinian population of Gaza broke the oppressive situation in which the Israeli army of occupation wanted to bury it. A hole was made in the wall which was closing the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. Like escaped prisoners from a penal colony, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were searching for food, a place to get warm and shelter to protect themselves from the barbarism of the Jewish state. By this movement, the Palestinians show that they can not accept a life as outcasts. No people would know how to accept it.

Barely four days after the recent departure of George Bush from the Mideast, one can already count 40 dead in the Gaza Strip and more than 90 wounded the majority of them civilians. The Israeli blockade, a halt to the supply of fuel and goods of vital necessity, plunged the city of Gaza into darkness and destitution. The images from Gaza (without forgetting those from West Bank and the refugee camps) bring us back to the worst moments of history.

More than ever it is impossible to accept. Everyone knows and the Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak reaffirmed that the offensive is not over. The objective of the occupation forces is the complete annihilation of all forms of resistance and the destruction of the Palestinian nation because these are the preliminary steps for the creation of the pseudo Palestinian State where two-thirds of the people would be excluded and displaced.

Fifteen years after Oslo, 8 years after the election of Bush as president of the U.S., it is the same policy of ethnic purification that began with the creation of the Jewish state in 1948 and which continues. From the Road Map to the Annapolis Conference, the pressure against the democratic national demands of the Palestinian people, the first of which is the right

of return, has always been maintained. Neither the United States nor Israel is looking for new solutions, but rather the annihilation of all the foundations upon which a people exist. The right of the refugees to return and to rebuild the destroyed villages – is it not this right which is at stake?

The Palestinians are supposed to accept their confinement inside of the pseudo “state” which rests upon less than 12% of their historical territory and inside of their camps. They are supposed to abandon their right to be a nation. Is it normal for a people to live freely on their own lands? What democratic person can be opposed to this?

How can Bush talk about the objective of “peace and liberty” while it prohibits about seven million refugees to return, and while a people, divided by force, finds itself threatened everywhere, whether it be in the interior of the Israeli state, inside of the occupied territories since 1967 or in the Diaspora?

We repeat, as we never cease to do, doesn’t the condition advanced by an all around democratic solution reside in implementation of the right to return? The implementation of this right implies the establishment of a political democracy, in other words a framework which can secure the full and complete expression of the equality of rights for everyone, Arabs and Jews, who want to live upon the same land, in a single democratic secular state.

Enough of barbarism and repression! For the right of return of all refugees to a single secular and democratic state!

The magazine Dialogue, which supports the international conference convened by Salah Salah and Daniel Gluckstein (April 2008 in Madrid), believes that under the present circumstances it is more necessary than ever for such an initiative to be organized. We propose that the Palestinian question be freely discussed and that, we repeat, it be established as a world question to bring about a halt to the antidemocratic chaos that has been organized on a global scale. This is our commitment. ■

Messages sent by endorsers of the appeal for an international conference

Omar Sabri Kitmitto (Syria)

I am a Palestinian refugee although I hold a Norwegian Citizenship. I served my people as the Palestinian Ambassador to Norway, Denmark and Iceland for twenty years (1985-2005). The right of return was one very important task of my job. The right of return for me is not an individual case. It is the entire Palestinian people's issue and I hold it as my prior duty towards my Palestinian People and myself.

The policies of the present leadership of the PLO and the Palestinian Authority reduced the hope of the Palestinian refugees to realize their dream of return on one hand and weakened the power of the resolution of the UN number 194. This is why I see that a collective initiative by different experts and Ngo's can make great pressure in the favor of this issue.

Helen A. Spalding (USA)

Somehow the "Separate but Equal", more correctly Separate and Unequal, doctrine which the United States rejected for itself is supposed to work for Palestine. Two separate states will still be at war, since each will wish to claim all of Palestine. The ghettoization of Palestinians hasn't worked, and two separate states, with one armed by the US, will be the same thing under a different title. The US and its allies refused to accept the results of a free and fair election among the Palestinians, because they don't like Hamas, which was elected by its people. Therefore, they refused to deal with Hamas and punished the Palestinians for electing it by once again imposing sanctions. It is not up to the US, or Israel or Great Britain or any other outsider to choose a leader for the Palestinians. The so-called "two state" solution won't work because Israel and the US want to keep the Palestinians slaves in their own territories. The European and American people didn't want to have the Jews living among them, so they divided another people's territory and gave it to the Jews. Proper reparations after the horrors of



the Holocaust and WW II would have been to return the European Jews who survived to their own homes in Europe and protected them there. However, that would have meant facing their complicity in the destruction of the Jews and allowing them to live in peace in their own homes. The European and American allies thought they could just send all the Jews to Palestine and not have to deal with them. Never mind that this meant displacing the Palestinians. The European and American powers had been carving up the Middle East for centuries, either for conquest or oil. Clearly, they don't care about the rights of indigenous peoples, whatever their religion. Let the outsiders get out and leave the tribes of the area, one of which is the Hebrews, to make their own decisions. The vast majority of Israeli citizens don't want an on-going war. Surely they and their neighbours can work out a solution together. The Hebrews, after all, lived among their Semitic cousins for centuries before Europeans and Americans interfered. The Americans, in any case, have no room to talk. Their own indigenous people are still confined to areas in the deserts which the invaders thought worthless, and were therefore willing to give up. The homelands of these people, in the meantime, were treated as though they had, of right, always belonged to the European invaders. Until American makes just reparations to their own first nations people, they had best

mind their own business. The Europeans, meanwhile, haven't managed to live in peace among themselves, either, and have work to do in their own countries!

Ismail Patel « Friends of Al-Aqsa », (UK)

It is time for civic society to rise up against the oppression and injustice taking place across the Palestinian territories. Unless the Israeli war machine is stopped, the future will remain bleak for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Norma J. F. Harrison, Peace and Freedom Party (USA)

As George Bisharat - and probably others, as well - have said, it's already one state, with bantustans. The objective is to deal realistically with the situation. One democratic, non-religious, non-nationalistic, socialist state for all the people who live there, with the right of return for the people ousted in the 1948 insanity. Being socialist means all the people there are to be provided full human comforts, needs, natural enjoyment of life, including security - unto their children's children.

The land is now one state - with bantustans, says George Bisharat. The people there as everywhere need and want a socialist state without regard for religion or ethnicity; equal rights for all people including children. The work to attain these needs to be by all the effected parties, democratically, in the sense that no entity is seeking its own benefit; that all participants proceed toward establishment of this just state, this just State. Foremost of course, is the right of return.

Salem Abu Hawash (Palestine)

I support firmly such integral and just vision for Palestine Issue, as all other models for solving the conflict failed to proceed toward meaningful steps to bring peace or security in Palestine and the region, because those models based on discriminatory lines between the weak and strong parties, without no reference in international law and human rights standards with accordance to modern democracy freedoms and rights. The whole country is under the control of one colonial power which based on racist ideology and practice. So the international community - at first civil community- has to review and look into another alternatives based on morality and international human rights and law standards for real and just peace relations and mutual future.

Smadar Carmon (Canada)

It is time for Palestine/Israel to follow Human rights and justice. stop the endless suffering.

Zeinat Abdel-Madjid (Suisse)

It is high time the idea of a single secular and democratic State on the entire territory of historic Palestine was revived. The idea was promoted by the "FATAH" movement during the '60s but then it was gradually dropped under the pressure of various unfavourable international situations. I hope you are going to stick to this idea so it really comes into being as it is the only solution that can ensure peace and security for all the people who live in Palestine: Jews, Christians and Muslims.

The security of the Israeli state is synonymous with repression of the right to return

by Salah Mohammed (Palestinian activist- Algeria).

The public declaration by the Israeli Foreign Affairs Minister (November 4, 2007) was not surprising. She emphasized the priority of the security of Israel versus that of the Palestinian state. Worse yet, this declaration put an end to the Israeli tricks. Livni summed up the Israeli conception of two states beginning with the viewpoint of Bush. Sadly, the Palestinian position was not clarified. This approach aims to provoke the Palestinian people and to disregard the daily positions of the Palestinian leaders about the project of a state as an organizational element of the whole of the Palestinian movement.

What did the Israeli minister mean with this short phrase? What is the definition of security within the racist state of occupation? And how does he see the purpose and role of the Palestinian state? Do the Israelis truly want an independent state for the Palestinians or rather a protectorate without any authority and lacking any sovereignty and therefore subservient to Israeli security? The main Israeli political parties work in a strategic sense and not a short term one. This strategic sense is linked to the “purity” of the Israeli state which can not lead to anything other than the removal of the whole issue of the Palestinian refugees, which represent more than half of the Palestinian people, and it would also erase the last resistance to the Green Line. In that way the whole phenomenon of resistance would come to an end.

First: The right to return

For two decades the American-Israeli partnership has not tired of presenting alternatives to the right to return: naturalization, expatriation, damages, reintegration and finally a return to the Gaza Strip and Jordan. Nevertheless, this partnership has not reached the point of proposing the right to return of the refugees to their homes from which they were expelled by the force of terror and planned massacres. The right to return has been guaranteed by international law and the resolutions, specifically Resolution 194 which grants to the Palestinian people the collective and

individual right to return. This is not only a human right. It is also a legal and political right. And it is to avoid this right that the American initiatives are being put forth in collaboration with their Israeli partner. Before Clinton, and after him up to W. Bush, together with the Likoud, and Kadima and Olmert, they are very clear. The strategic and final security of the Israeli state can not, according to Israel, be harmed by the right to return.

The American president Clinton proposed to the Palestinian delegation in December 2000, shortly before the end of his mandate, the transformation of the question of the Palestinian refugees into a humanitarian question apart from and no longer one of a people who struggle for their freedom and their land. He proposed the return, by those who were willing to do it, to the lands of a future Palestinian state that would take place according to American criterions. And, with these ambiguous and terrifying words, Clinton spoke of the return to the “Israeli territories” of some thousands of Palestinians. This corresponds to a system of family regroupment according to historic criterions or by percentages and through humanitarian organizations such as the Red Cross. While explaining the terms of his project, Clinton proposes the naturalization of the other refugees there or where they are located. The damages they have suffered would be established by international funds with hundreds of millions of dollars available (according to him the national causes of the people are bought and sold just like any other product)...While refusing to grant to the Palestinian delegation the right to debate and ask questions, Clinton concluded that “this is how Resolution 194 will be applied” and finished by asking those represented to tell their political leadership that they could not reject them. As for Bush, he did not do any better except that he is opposed to the return of all Palestinians in “Israel”, sharing therefore the same viewpoint of the Minister Livni. The right to return is the central theme of the Palestinian

question and the eventual political solution. If the American administration and its entourage truly wanted to find a just and equitable solution for everybody, especially for the people who have paid the high price for the plans of colonization within the Arab countries, the right to return is therefore the only bridge capable of creating a serious change in the historic reconciliation between the Palestinian people and the Jews. The reconciliation will not be made without recognition of the right to return. Forcing the Palestinians to give up this right would be nothing less than the destruction of this bridge. The reconciliation would be coerced and it would have as its basis the Zionist imperialist plan. As a result, the door would be closed to any democratic solution founded upon the realities of the Arab-Zionist conflict. The example of South Africa is the best example of a democratic and just solution.

Second: the exchange... or a Jewish state.

The exchange of land consists of giving to the Palestinians some land in exchange for what had been confiscated by Israel in Jordan. The problem here is not in the figures of the situation in which the proportion of land given is equivalent to the land confiscated and added to the 1948 territories. The problem is what Israel has in mind with this maneuver:

1 – Final establishment of the colonies that are around Jordan and its neighboring lands, which is more than 50% of all the territory of Jordan. This would break up the country. If the government of occupation has these lands “and more”, why does it insist on confiscating a majority of the territory of Jordan? Is it trying to give an appearance of legitimacy to the occupation? Is it trying to wipe out the foundations of the Palestinian state?

2- Control over East Jerusalem by new evasive methods which change nothing with respect to Israeli goals. One can cite rumors that come from some of those who are in charge of the occupation in which they speak of the possibility of giving up some areas which have a high concentration of Palestinians to the National Authority. The reality shows, on the contrary, that the Zionist project is always in progress. The Palestinian institutions occupy Jerusalem and some residents of Jerusalem are in effect living in Ramallah.

3- Avoiding the international resolutions which call for the withdrawal of the colonizing forces from the territories occupied in 1967 and replacing the international framework with that of the American administration and the agreements reached which seek to erase the resolutions that support the rights of the Palestinians.

The land exchange is nothing more than a way to construct a “pure” Jewish state that eliminates all Palestinians and which seeks to even exclude them as a national minority. This arrangement is not easy to put into effect, given the international position of the Palestinians. However, certain extremist currents do not hide their desire to drive out the native people from their own lands inside of Israel.

In short, certain matters, according to the Israeli-American partnership, should be dealt with from the “strategic” perspective of the security of Israel. We then take on an important point. It remains to be determined what they are. With the support of *Quartette*, we are in the process of influencing the questions that don’t perhaps attract so much attention but are still important, such as the restructuring of the institutions of the National Authority and the security apparatus. Certain Palestinian sources call for the American president to intervene personally at times. This is the same situation with the restructuring of the PLO. An important task entrusted to Blair is to “assist” in the construction of the National Authority. The problem here is the conjuncture on one hand of the desire and the need of the Palestinians for democratic global reform and the American plan on the other hand. In this way, certain decisions taken with the goal of restructuring the Palestinian institutions both internally and from the outside are confused. Are they headed in one direction or the other?

The struggle for freedom that the Palestinian people have lived through, and also that of other peoples that have fought for their freedom and their independence, has shown that the national struggle for free can not be stopped. It is the cause of an entire people over many generations. It is nothing more than the matter of thousands of persons who want to be free of their status as refugees. This problem can not be separated from that of the Palestinian people as a whole.

November 2, 2007 90th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

by Sam Ayache

November 2, 2007 marks the 90th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. This document is historic because it is a declaration that all currents of Zionism, from the right to the left, have used for more than 60 years to affirm the recognition of the right of the state of Israel to exist. Here is the text of this declaration, written in the form of a personal letter addressed by Lord Balfour, Secretary to the Colonies of the British Cabinet, to Lord Rothschild

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have the pleasure of addressing you, in the name of the government of His Majesty, this declaration which follows of sympathy towards the Zionist aspirations, a declaration submitted to the cabinet and approved by it.

“The government of His Majesty views favorably the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will make all efforts to facilitate the completion of this objective. It is clearly understood that nothing will be done that can undermine the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish groups that exist in Palestine, nor to the rights and the political status of the Jews living in all the other countries”.

I would be grateful if you would be able to bring the declaration to the attention of the Zionist Federation.

Arthur James Balfour.

But what is the value of this declaration, written in the purest tradition of the colonialist mentality, with respect to the right of the people to self determination?

En November 1917, Palestine is a territory that was still part of the Ottoman Empire and still officially administered by the Turkish authorities of Damas. But despite all of that, this fact is not even mentioned within the

Declaration. For the members of the British Cabinet, the future of the peoples of the Middle East can easily be decided on the banks of the Thames over two cups of tea. And in London, in 1917, those who had political power considered decisions taken in the interests of the Empire to be legitimate – in other words the profits of City without giving any consideration to the national demands of the peoples affected.

This is a model that is contemptuous of the most basic democratic rights.

Admittedly, the Balfour Declaration does include a reference to the protection of “*non-Jewish groups that exist in Palestine*”. But again what is the value of this reference with respect to democracy?

Following the strategy put in place by the celebrated British officer “Lawrence of Arabia” who operated in this region at the time. the Declaration seemed to give guarantees of protection to the Arab populations that were living in the territory coveted by the British Empire, all while giving British protection to the Zionist colony at the same time. The many protection agreements made at the same time to everyone was nothing but a front because what was important was something much different.

The truth be told, this Declaration was all about justifying the military conquest of Palestine, which constituted an essential part of the strategy of the Empire. The British need to protect the Suez Canal, where City owned a majority of the shares, and their “Indies Route”. They also wanted to limit French ambitions in Lebanon and Syria and gain control over the oil fields that were starting to be exploited. When the Declaration of Lord Balfour was published, the General Staff had already organized an expedition of British troops under Edmund Allenby to Gaza. This led to decisive victory over the Turks at Beer-shev’a. In December, 1917, British troops took control of Jerusalem and in September 1918, they reached Megiddo,

therefore conquering all the territory that would become at the end of the war, the “British Mandate” over Palestine.

The strategic plan laid out by Lord Balfour (and the young Winston Churchill) worked perfectly both as military plan and a political plan. The message from Balfour was delivered in the name of the government of His Majesty and was addressed to Lord Rothschild, as head of the British Jewish community. It was the government of His Majesty that recognized Lord Rothschild, a British subject, as its spokesperson and that designated him as an intermediary for His Majesty with the Zionist Federation.

In exchange for the Balfour Declaration, the leadership of the Zionist movement, which several years later had instead depended on the Kaiser and the Ottoman Empire under the encouragement of Theodor Herzl (he died prematurely in 1904), lined up temporarily along side the British against the Turks. This reversal of alliances was essentially the work of the chemist and Zionist leader Haim Weizmann. Born in Byelorussia in 1874, Weizmann obtained British citizenship and worked in the armaments industry. In 1917, he developed a procedure that allowed for the mass production of acetone, which enters into the manufacture of TNT and other explosives.

This discovery allowed Weizmann to cash in on his services and Lord Balfour was grateful. Weizmann spent all his life as a faithful servant of the Foreign Office, even when he became the first president of the independent State of Israel in 1948.

So it was a discovery linked to the armaments industry and the arms dealers that gave us the Balfour Declaration. The fact that the explosives produced on an industrial scale thanks to the discovery of Weizmann was able to lead to the death of tens of thousands of soldiers, in which a large number of Jewish soldiers were in both camps, does not seem to have caused any emotion in Weizmann.

Can one expect anything else from this figure that at the end of the day was nothing more than a political schemer, even if certain people presented him, and they were completely wrong, as having been influenced by the

“socialist vision” of the life in the Kibbutz? Weizmann led the “democratic faction” in the heart of the “practical” Zionist movement, those that among the Zionists were in favor of a mass colonization of Palestine.

And the other currents within Zionism?

There existed at the beginning of the 20th century a Zionist “workers” movement that had a political party that claimed to represent the working class and Marxism. It was called “Poalei Tzyion” (The Workers of Zion) and even if this party was very small among the Jewish workers that preferred in their great majority to follow the traditional workers parties, didn’t the Poalei Tzyion officially break with the World Zionist Congress after 1907 in order to form the World Movement of Zionist workers? How did the leaders of this “Zionist Socialist” current react when the British cabinet was in the process of negotiating with the Zionist movement? Did they follow the path of breaking with this and in favor of class independence or did they go and rejoin the ranks of the World Zionist Congress which they had denounced as a bourgeois current?

Pressured into exile in New York in 1914, Ber Borokhov, the main leader of Poalei Tzyion, still embraced Marxism and supported the Zimmerwald Socialist Conference. The evolution of Ber Borokhov is therefore interesting and he deserves to be granted a place in history. Here is an important passage from a speech he gave in September, 1917. This Zionist Socialist leader gave this speech during the conference of Poalei Tzyion in Kiev. Borokhov had returned to the Ukraine after the February Revolution:

“The socialist conferences of Zimmerwald and Stockholm mark a new era in the struggle of the world proletariat. But is the Jewish worker in step with these new tendencies? Despite his enthusiasm and his incredible revolutionary energy, the Jewish worker exerts only a little influence. He is as impotent as Prometheus chained to his rock. This tragic fate obliges him to demand a home for the Jewish people”.

Very close to the references to Zimmerwald and to Stockholm, in an excerpt from the speech addressed to the workers in full revolution, one finds that Borokhov uses the same terms “home

for the Jewish people” as in the Balfour Declaration. More than a mere similarity, isn't all of that a program of submission to British Imperialism which is precisely against what the Zimmerwald Conference was all about?

One can also point out the total idiocy of the comment made by Borokhov about the weak influence of the Jewish worker upon the revolutionary energy because this is the total opposite of what occurs in reality. And, what is well understood, while certain historians claim that he would have made a contribution to the preparation of the October Revolution, with Ber Borokhov there is not a single word about the Russian Revolution itself! A passionate

opponent of Bolshevism, Ber Borokhov got himself elected to the Democratic Assembly. It was while returning to this assembly, hostile to Soviet power, that Ber Borokhov dies in December, 1917.

In the final analysis, more than the Balfour Declaration itself, it is perhaps the fact that “Socialist Zionism” had rallied around the colonization policy under the protection of the British that constitutes the most important feature of the situation in Palestine at the end of 1917.

We are acquainted with the dramatic consequences of this today.

Book review: *“Exile and Sovereignty – Judaism, Zionism and Binational thought”* by Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin

by Jacques Werschtein

In the introduction to his essay, *“Exile and Sovereignty – Judaism, Zionism and Binational thought”* that was published in France by *Editions La Fabrique*, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin begins his reflexions with *“his membership in the Jewish Israeli community”* and for *“the recognition of the victims of the Zionist policy, Jews as well as Arabs”*.

From the beginning, the author condemns the principle of separation that Zionism imposes on the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs of Israel, of the territories and the refugees, on the Western Jews and the Eastern Jews, on the Jewish tradition and the *“Israeli-Hebrew culture”*, on Judaism and the national religious myths. All of these are opposed to each other as a precondition to every practical regulation of political problems... He adds later on, *“reintroducing at this time all the elements that history has hidden is the starting point of all change”* and also *“when Zionism wanted to make the land of Israel the homeland of the Jews, in the national sense of the term, it deliberately ignored the history of the inhabitants of Palestine ... everything was mobilized to create a direct link between the Jews and the ancient past and, at the same time, erase the most recent past and the present (...). The Jewish Israeli society was installed in a ghetto founded upon its hostility towards the cultural universe in which it was established – the Arab world. It erected walls between itself and its neighbors, walls which were built, at least in spirit, with Zionism. If considered as the vanguard for imperialism, this ghetto possesses a weapon of mass destruction(...)”*.

In the article that he published on Sept. 4, 2006, during the Israel attack against the people of Lebanon, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin wrote, *“the Israeli alignment alongside the United States against Islam does nothing but weaken the existence of Israel ... It is Israel that will destroy Israel”* and he stated, *“It is only upon the recognition of the rights of the Palestinians, that we can ask for or even demand, a*

recognition of the collective rights of the Israeli Jews.. mutual recognition of each other’s rights and national and civic equality...”

With *“Exile and Sovereignty”*, the author engages in a way, without political preconditions, the discussion with all the Jews that come from Palestine and those who refused or refuse the separation, the oppression and the expulsion of the Palestinians that are perpetrated by the Zionist leaders. He also engages those who express a binational thinking whose political form and content have not been achieved. The author adds, *“the binational approach does not necessarily lead to support of the position that a single state over the Palestinian territory of the British mandate would settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In other words, the idea of binationalism is not an idea that is opposed to the two state political solution, but more like an analytical grid, a critical tool in order to describe a reality and define responsibilities...”*

“the idea of binationalism is not an idea that is opposed to the two state political solution”

Later on, he explains his proposal: *“the binational thinking begins with the description of the reality created by Zionism and continues to determine the responsibility of Zionism (...) it constitutes the indispensable text for all analysis of the State of Israel (...) Only binationalism proposes an alternative conceptual framework that is global and a precondition to any settlement between the Jews and the Palestinians, based on the reciprocal recognition and equality of its peoples and citizens.”*

Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin therefore submits to the reader’s examination very rich materials prescribed by *“his binational reading grid”* concerning the origins and the aims of the falsehoods carried out by Zionism, where the common denominator isn’t the search for a refuge for the Jews, but the return of the Jews

driven out of Palestine, in the year 70 of our time, after the destruction of the Temple, and by means of the expropriation of the lands of the Arabs and their expulsion. In order to do this, the Zionist ideology gives birth to a new culture, warlike and combative, which reconquers Palestine and transforms the image of the Jews... that becomes in turn, "Hebraic", "Sabra", "Israeli"...

The author notes that, "Zionism, having totally renounced certain basic aspects of the religion and the traditional Jewish way of life, did not abandon religious myth: it affirmed that its true meaning was nationalist. This nationalism is therefore a return to the biblical origins of Judaism and serves as a revelation (...). The definition of the State of Israel as a state of the Jewish people exposes in a brutal manner its theological dimension... The state which has said more than once that its aims to replace The Temple, appears as a nation that does not exist any more. It is a state of the "Jewish people"... it is not only a state of all its citizen, not only a definition based upon the dispossession of the Arab-Palestinian minority, but it almost considers itself as the state for Jews throughout the entire world. The religious myth was nationalized. In other words it was translated into nationalist terminology (...) With a somewhat provocative summary, the secular Zionist conscience can be expressed by the formulation: "God does not exist, but he promised us this land."

"One can easily understand that the question of the refugees is a sensitive matter and a source of anguish for Israelis. To refer to this responsibility is also to admit that it is a double one and concerns the whole world: the responsibility with respect to the Israeli Jews and with respect to the Palestinians constitutes (...). The question of the refugees is part of the Jewish question. It allows us to go beyond the limited debate about a division into two states, a solution that might be part of a process of political reconciliation, but that can not take into account all aspects of the Palestinian exile. The condition of being in exile does not concern just the refugees. It is the lot of all the Palestinians. This is because exile is the situation of a people whose territory was carved up and its homeland was separated from them by force. Exile is the situation of the inhabitants of the occupied territories, deprived of their

citizenship and forced to submit to a regime of occupation and colonization. Exile is also the condition of the Palestinian citizens of Israel due to the fact that the state defines itself as one for the Jewish people."

"From a purely formalistic point of view, one can define Israel as a democracy: it is undeniable that the Israeli regime respects certain important elements such as holding regular elections, and a certain freedom of expression (...). The discourse that justifies the close association between the terms "Jewish" and "democratic" in order to define the state does not consider the Israeli borders of 1967, as if the occupation and the colonization never existed. This position makes an abstraction of the inhabitants of the occupied territories. By separating the two questions, the illusion is created that the occupation is over while in fact it has been prolonged and intensified. While the question of the definition of the State of Israel is certainly posed differently for the Palestinians inside the occupied territories versus the Palestinian minority that live in Israel, it is about two sides of the same question: the rights of the Jews and the Arabs inside the country. These rights form a whole and it is only by dealing with both of them at the same time that progress can be made towards democracy and putting in practice the principles of mutual recognition and of equality."

"Defining Israel as the "State of the Jewish people" creates problems, even accepting the occupation as being over, giving the impression that the Palestinians enjoy total sovereignty in the territories annexed in 1967 and that the settlements have been dismantled. This definition shows that it is impossible to consider the State of Israel as a nation state in the habitual sense of the term. It is neither a nation state, nor a democratic state... but a state that wants to create a nation which embodies a perpetual objective of immigration, repopulation, Judaism... a combination of theology and colonialism (...)"

Isn't there a contradiction between wanting to speak of a "binational" state in this situation where according to the author himself there is no "Jewish nation"? The binationalism uses the "ethnic" and religious origins of each one in order to define their political perspectives. But

isn't the Palestinian question itself a national question? Who can be against equal rights for Jews and Arabs? Is not the starting point for any solution that calls for the right to return the recognition of the Palestinian nation and a guarantee of equal political and social rights for all its constituents?

We must show that to support "two states" is to deny the right to the establishment of the Palestinian nation. The discrimination towards the Arabs is not the consequence of a bad policy but a foundational fact. The process of exclusion and expropriation is inscribed in the essence of the state defined as "The State of the Jewish People".

The "analytical grid" of Amnon Raz-Kakotzkin deals with the multiple aspects of reality created by Zionism. In particular, it calls to mind the "double system of administration that is in effect in Israel: on one hand the state institutions and on the other the institutions of the Jewish people: Jewish Agency, Zionist Federation, KKL (National Jewish Federation)", etc... Whereas the institutions of the state are based on the principle of equality for all its citizens (although in practice it is far from it) the institutions of the "Jewish people" are explicitly destined to serve the interests of the Jews...

Both the existence of these institutions, as well as their purpose, is enough to invalidate the democratic character of the state and contribute to the structural inequality.

The Palestinians of Israel are victims of a system that deprives them of their rights. Not only do the expropriations continue even today, but the definition of the state and its territory continues to bring about a systematic discrimination of Arabs in all aspects of life: education, building permits, starting up businesses, etc... Numerous Arab villages do not have official existence and, from this fact, they do not benefit from any public services that

can be part of modern state. In this context, the rationalizations about "Jewish and democratic" elude any serious debate about equal rights.

"To appeal to a binational vision is to accept the idea that Palestine is a country of exile for those who have been chased from it and for those who live there. It includes those who never stop affirming with violence their sovereignty and their power (...) This is what binationalism is opposed to. It is the principal of separation. This has been the constant guiding principle of Zionist policy since the 1930's and has inspired all the "peace negotiations" for the past fifteen years (...) The idea of peace is not linked to that of a common life but to that of an essential homogeneous Jewish space. It is about the construction of a wall and the reinforcement of the colonization process (...)."

Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin ends his essay with this alternative: "There exists a fundamental difference between a Palestinian state founded upon the principle of separation and the demographic issue that goes hand in hand with it versus a Palestinian state founded upon a binational principle. In the latter case, the state is not the final objective but rather a means to progressively promote the cause of Palestinian rights(...). It is the only way towards the future. If it does not lead towards an alternative program, it takes into consideration the oppressed within an orientation of equality and indicates the necessary context to avoid a catastrophe."

What ever may be the eventual nuances and divergences or differences about the method, this contribution by Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin is going to be presented for discussion to all those that battle against imperialism and the Zionist state, for the creation of a single democratic Palestinian state with equal rights for its Jewish and Arab components and to the readers of Dialogue.

NB : In the original book review, the quotations come from the French version of the book by Amnon Raz Krakotzkin.

Israel in Search of its Roots in the Land of Palestine Zionism and Archaeology (Part II)¹

by Claudine DAUPHIN
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*In memory of Aharon Kempinski (1939-1994), Israeli archaeologist and
Human Rights activist, who was the first to describe to me the "Myth of Masada"*

Soon after the General Assembly of the United Nations had voted on 29 November 1947 Resolution 181 which resulted in the partition of Palestine, the archaeologist Eliezer Sukenik stated firmly during a debate in December 1947: "I do not believe that the Jewish State will preserve its antiquities. We must place scientific sovereignty above political sovereignty. We are interested in the archaeology of the whole land, and the only way [to ensure this] is a unified Department of Antiquities". The premonition of the father of Yigael Yadin who was to excavate Hazor and Masada, turned out to be right. With the aim of erasing Palestine's Islamic heritage, Ben-Gurion shamelessly did to Arab Palestine exactly what he accused (at a 1950 meeting of the Society for Land of Israel Studies) "foreign conquerors" of having done: turn "our land into a desert".

David versus Goliath: the archaeologist against the army (1947-1957)

On 26 July 1948, the Department of Antiquities was founded as part of the Department of Public Works in the Ministry of Labour. Its members, notably its Director Shmuel Yeivin, who had been employed by the Department of Antiquities of the Mandatory Government of Palestine, attempted at first to prevent depredations. In vain. Besides the collections of the Notre-Dame of Jerusalem monastery on the 1947 "Green Line", and those of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, which were stolen, the Caesarea Museum was emptied of a hundred inscriptions and column shafts. Likewise, all the finds from the excavations of the University of Chicago at Tel Megiddo since the 1920s, as well as their archives, disappeared from the offices of the archaeological expedition. The

American Consulate General in Jerusalem demanded an enquiry. The local military commanders accused Arab units. Yeivin discovered that the real culprits were Israeli soldiers who had raided the archaeological site and torched the offices of the American team. In a confidential report, Yeivin quotes an internal note of the local army unit: "After consultation with the battalion commander and the brigade's operations officer, we agreed - in the event of further investigation by the U.S. Consul General - to lie (shamefully) and to say that we found the place in this condition when it was captured, and that the crime had been committed by Arabs before they fled".

More heinous was the planned destruction of nearly 500 Palestinian towns and villages, many of which included ancient stones in their buildings, and even substantial remains. From August 1948 onwards, the army demolished Tiberias so radically that even Ben-Gurion was taken aback when he visited the city in the Winter of 1949. Sometimes, the army's destructive zeal reached absurd levels. Inspecting Haifa in August 1948, Shmuel Yeivin discovered that the army was in the process of pulling down great chunks of the Arab town around Hamra Square (now Paris Square) under the direction of the city's Chief Engineer: "With our own eyes we saw the ruins of half of a building that had served as a synagogue on the Street of the Jews... According to Jews who live there and wandered among the ruins, two or three other synagogues were also destroyed here". In February 1950, under pressure notably from Yeivin who had realized that without State intervention, the urban past of the country would completely disappear, Ben-Gurion established a government committee for Sacred and

Historical Sites and Monuments. In its *Report* of October 1951, this committee declared that certain sites had to be preserved as "whole units": "Acre, a few quarters in Safed, small sections of Jaffa and Tiberias, of Ramle and Lod, a few sections of Tarshiha". Even these decisions, however, were not respected. Yeivin was the first to challenge the decision to demolish Jaffa. Painters and sculptors who had settled in the abandoned city and the staff of the Development Authority joined his struggle, thus sparing a few sections from eradication. Likewise, Yeivin protested to the Ministry of Education regarding the decision to destroy the Old City of Lod... in vain. Following British Mandatory Law, the Israeli Antiquities Law considered ancient only sites and monuments pre-dating 1700. Yeivin nevertheless considered that sites had to be preserved for the sake of tourism and as "cultural and educational assets and living historical testimonies that every enlightened state is obliged to preserve". Even the holy sites of Islam were not spared. In 1950, Majdal (modern Ashkelon) was still a mixed town: 3,000 of its 12,000 Palestinian inhabitants of 1948 lived in a closed, fenced-off ghetto, next to which settled newly-arrived Jewish immigrants. In July 1950, the Israel Defence (rather Occupation) Forces under the direct responsibility of the Commander of the Southern Zone Moshe Dayan (who in the 1960-70s projected himself as an antiquities lover and built up a superb private collection by funding networks of tomb-robbers in the Shephela), dynamited Mash'ad Nabi Husain in the ruins of ancient Ashkelon, within the framework of the destruction of mosques, notably those of Yavneh and Ashdod. According to Moslem Tradition, this XIth-century AD monument, contained the head of Husain b. Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Mohamed, whose death in Kerbela in Iraq sparked off the schism between Shiites and Sunnis.

The ideological basis of this destructive madness is put forward in a note dated August 1957 from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Labour at the request of Golda Meier: "Firstly, it is necessary to get rid of the ruins in the heart of Jewish communities, in important centres or in central transportation arteries; rapid treatment must be given to the ruins of villages, such as Birwe, North of Shefaram, and Zippori, of which the

residents are in the country; in areas where there is no development, for instance along the railway line from Jerusalem to Bar Giora, one has the depressing impression of a once-living civilized land; [our] attention should also be directed towards ruins in distinctly tourist areas, such as the ruins of the Circassian village of Caesarea, which is intact but empty... It should be taken into account that the participation of non-governmental elements requires caution, since politically it is desirable for the operation to be executed without anyone grasping its political significance" (quoted by Meron Rapoport, "History Erased", *Ha'aretz*, 23 July 2007).

The role of Archaeology in moulding the Israeli identity, from the Suez Affair to the Six Days' War (1956-1967)

The archaeologist, the sabra, the agronomer and the Head of State

Enrolled in a school for recruits for non-combatant military services, the hero of Joshua Kenaz's novel, *The Murmurs of the Heart*, is an enthusiastic amateur archaeologist, as were many first-generation *sabras* (1950-1967), in shorts and sandals, head covered by a small cotton hat, and holding a trowel²: "Believe it or not, a shepherd of Kibbutz Megiddo grazes his flock near an ancient tell. Suddenly, he finds a tablet inscribed in cuneiform. He entrusts it to archaeologists. These decipher the text. They discover that it is part of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Someone has written it some 3500 years ago... Do you understand that? A story connected with Babylon... is suddenly found here. In the Land of Israel. Near one's house..., as if all this had waited for us. Until we came to discover it".

During the 1950s and 1960s, archaeological activity flowered in Israel. Besides numerous excavations on Biblical sites, the Nabatean and Byzantine caravan-cities of the Negev Desert (Avdat, Shivta and Kurnub-Mampsis) were restored by the Israel National Parks Authority. Documents of prime importance for the history of the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome (AD 132-136) were unearthed in caves of the

2 *Sabra* (Hebrew for the fruit of the prickly pear cactus, with thorns outside, but soft inside): name given to the Israelis born in Israel.

Judaeen Desert. Ben-Gurion took personal interest in the latter two projects. The Nabatean irrigation systems which were perfected by the Byzantines, in particular the exploitation of subsidence by retaining water in pools delimited by dykes or barrages, which created water reserves enabling intensive agriculture, were rich in lessons to "make the desert bloom". On Ben-Gurion's intervention and under the scientific control of the palaeobotanist Michael Evenari, a Nabatean farm was reconstructed in Shivta. In his article, "Die Archaologie als bestimmender Faktor in der israelischen Gesellschaft und Kultur" ("Archaeology as a determining factor in Israeli society and culture", *Judaica* 1989, pp. 2-20)³, Aharon Kempinski mischievously points out that the fact that the Nabateans were Arabs was glossed over, for it would not have been proper in the 1950s and 1960s in Israel to draw one's inspiration from agricultural methods originating in an Arab tradition (p. 14).

Ransacked by the Ta'amra Beduins of Transjordan, the Nahal Hever caves in the Judaeen Desert where the leader of the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome, Bar-Kokhba, and his warriors had sought refuge, produced *papyri* which the Beduins hastily sold in Jordanian East Jerusalem and in Amman. Yohanan Aharoni was the first archaeologist to undertake of his own decision and without State assistance, to salvage the contents of these caves. Owing to the national and religious character of this little-documented revolt, Ben-Gurion requested the Chief-of-Staff Chaim Laskov to organize a team headed by his friend Yadin to excavate these caves of the Judaeen Desert. The announcement by Yadin of the discovery of letters and contracts written by Bar-Kokhba and his men in Hebrew (which symbolized Jewish national independence), Aramaic being the common language of the time, created a phenomenal stirr. On his visit to the excavation site, the President of the State of Israel, Ben-Zvi, invited the members of the archaeological team to report on their work *ad hoc*. Yadin wrote later: "To say the truth: in the

presence of the President, I wished to dramatise somewhat the results of the discoveries. This was the reason for not having told anyone about the discovery of the letters and their content... When I got to the subject of Bar-Kokhba, I turned to the President (despite the presence of Ben-Gurion and others) and said: 'Your Excellency, Mr the President of the State of Israel, I now have the honour to show you letters that the last president of the State of Israel had written 1900 years ago: Bar-Kokhba'. I showed him slides of these letters. It is difficult to describe the atmosphere in the audience... The echo was enormous, as well as on the radio that evening, and the following day in the newspapers which devoted a first-page coverage to this news". Even more than the Nahal Hever caves, the Masada excavations (1963-1965) gripped the public with feverish excitement.

The Masada Myth

In AD 66, the First Jewish Revolt broke out in reaction to the extortions of the greedy and bloodthirsty Procurator of Judaea, Gessius Florus. The only contemporary historical testimony is the *Jewish War*, written by Yosef ben Matattiahu who led the rebellion in Galilee, and having gone over to the Romans after the fall of the fortress of Gamla in the Golan on 19 November 67 (*De Bello Judaico*, or *BJ* IV, xx), became the historian Flavius Josephus. From his narrative, this revolt appears not as a great popular movement united against the Roman oppressor (as put forward by Israeli propaganda), but confused and weakened by Jewish factions, Judaism being itself divided at the time into four "philosophies", Sadducee, Pharisean and Essenian, the fourth ideology (which advocated freedom outside the bosom of the Roman Empire) emanating from a group of Jewish fundamentalists, the *Sicarii*, described by Fl. Josephus as "robbers". Their name alludes to the small dagger (*sica*) which they drew from under their robes, to attack and murder their political and ideological opponents in broad daylight in the middle of Jerusalem and especially during the great religious festivals, as well as to threaten those whom they had taken as hostages in order to exchange them for some of their members who had been captured by the Romans (*BJ* II, xiii, 3). At the beginning of the Revolt, some of its most passionate promoters undertook an expedition to Masada, about 100

³ This article was translated into French at our request by our colleague, Sumerologist Jean-Pierre Grégoire, Honorary Research Director of the CNRS, whom we thank warmly

km to the Southeast of Jerusalem, 2 km inland from the Western shore of the Dead Sea, in one of the most arid and hot deserts of the globe (between May and October, temperatures oscillate between 33 and 40°C). On a plateau (645 x 315 m) on the summit of a mountain (alt. 320 m) surrounded by deep ravines, Alexander Jannaeus had erected a fortress to which Herod had added a magnificent palace. In the surprise-attack of 67, the Roman garrison was massacred and replaced by a Jewish garrison (*BJ* II, xvii, 2). Soon after, Manahem the *Sicarius* and his gang left Jerusalem for Masada, where he equipped his crew with arms taken out of Herod's stores which had been broken into. Protected by his bodyguards, Manahem returned to Jerusalem like a king, proclaimed himself the leader of the revolution, besieged the fortified upper city, murdered the High Priest of the Temple, and "became an unsufferable tyrant" (*BJ* II, xvii, 8-9). One of his relatives, Eleazar, son of Yair, and his supporters set up a conspiracy against him in the very precincts of the Temple. "Thinking to stifle the revolt", the Jerusalem population lapidated Manahem, chased after both factions of *Sicarii*, killing them as well as Manahem who had hidden on the Ophel, the Southern slope of the Temple Mount. "A small number (of *Sicarii*) succeeded in making their way to Masada, amongst them Eleazar.... Who later exercised his tyranny over Masada" (*BJ* II, xvii, 9).

After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, a "mopping-up" operation was conducted by the Romans against the fortresses which continued to defy them: Herodion and Machaerus (*BJ* VII, vi), and lastly Masada (*BJ* VII, viii) which was still held by the *Sicarii*. The latter conducted punitive expeditions in the surrounding district against those who preferred to submit to the Romans. The *Sicarii* looted, stole their herds and flocks, torched their houses. They chased all the men out of En-Gedi and massacred the women and children. The Xth *Legio Fretensis* surrounded Masada with a wall, thus preventing those trapped by the siege from escaping, established military bases at the foot of the mountain, and built a ramp on the Western side whence the Roman soldiers battered at the city wall, which they partly destroyed. The *Sicarii* then erected another wall, of wood with an earthen fill,

which absorbed the pounding of the battering rams, but the Romans put fire to it and destroyed it too. The Masada adventure was nearing its end. On 2 May 73, the leader of the *Sicarii*, Eleazar "did not allow anyone to flee", "decided that all had to die", and exhorted his companions passionately to prefer "death to bondage". Fl. Josephus notes that Eleazar's words "did not have the same effect on all those present. Some were in a hurry to obey, and they were nearly happy at the thought of such a beautiful death; but there were others, less hearty, who were touched by compassion for their wives and their families, and probably also for themselves, seeing death so near. They looked at each other, and their tears expressed their refusal" (*BJ* VII, vii). "Prey to sharp indignation and staring fixedly at those who were crying", Eleazar harangued them on the immortality of the soul, convincing them finally to sacrifice their wives and children (*BJ* VII, ix, 1-2). Having heaped together their belongings and set fire to them, they drew lots for ten of them to be the murderers of all, and then applied the same law to each other. From this carnage of 965 people there escaped only one old woman, a female relative of Eleazar and five children who had hidden in the underground water conduits of the city and who told the story to the Romans when they entered the "dead" city.

This hopeless rebellion, fomented by rival Jewish factions, resulted in total failure, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, large-scale massacres of Jews, and the collective suicide (forbidden by Judaism) of a band of terrorists and murderers – the *Sicarii* -, whose pugnacity was doubtful and who had taken their own families as hostages. How was this unsavoury adventure transformed into a "symbol of heroism and freedom for the Jewish people", to the extent that the sole name of Masada evokes instantly the motto: "Fight unto death rather than surrender; rather death than bondage and the loss of Freedom" (according to Moshe Dayan)?

In the 1920s, Zionist ideology was ripe for the emergence of strong symbols of Jewish heroism in order to cancel the Anti-Semitic stereotypes which showed Jews as usurers, passive, and not inclined to fight. Against the background of a debate between two major Zionist intellectuals, Ahad Ha'am and Berdyczewski, the latter

turning Masada into a symbol of Jewish heroism, the translation into modern Hebrew of Fl. Josephus' writings by Y.N. Simhoni was published in 1923. Then, in 1925, the historian Joseph Klosner of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem depicted, in his book *The Jewish Revolt and the Destruction of the Second Temple* (4th part of his *History of Israel* published in Jerusalem), Eleazar Ben-Yair as a national hero. Moreover, he asserted that a nation capable of an action as heroic as that of the *Sicarii* at Masada, was invincible indeed. In 1927, Yitzhak Lamdan's poem "Masada" caused a great stir. In 1937, the Jewish National Fund published a brochure with an article by Bar-Droma on the environment of the Dead sea next to a study by Klosner on the heroism of the *Sicarii*, described as freedom fighters, whose suicide he justified and glorified. Lastly, in 1941, the first book published by Am Oved, the publishing house of the Histadrut (the Israeli Workers' Union), directed by Berl Katzenelson, was the *Book of Heroism: a Literary and Historical Anthology*, which opened with Masada. The aim was to show youngsters that Jews had died heroically (which the insurgents of the Warsaw Ghetto would soon prove once again). That is why great chunks of this book were read aloud during clandestine meetings of the Hagana.

Shmaria Guttman was born in 1909 in Glasgow of Jewish Russian parents on their way to Palestine, where they settled in Merhaviva, in the North of the country, his baker father henceforth hobnobbing with ideological leaders such as Ben-Gurion and Katzenelson at meetings of the "Workers of Zion" (*Poalei Zion*). A youth counselor in the "Working Youth" movement (*Noar Oved*), Shmaria hiked with two comrades around the Dead Sea in 1933. They walked up to Masada holding a summary of Fl. Josephus' *Jewish War*. The site made a powerful impression on Guttman. He decided to share his experience with Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, the then head of the Jewish National Committee, who with common sense asked him: "Tell me, Shmaria, why are you so excited? Masada? 900 Jewish robbers ran from Jerusalem to Masada and committed suicide there. So what? What's so exciting?" (N. Ben-Yehuda, *Sacrificing Truth. Archaeology and the Myth of Masada*, New York 2002, p. 63). Undeterred by Ben-Zvi's reaction, Guttman continued to develop his interest in Masada.

The successes of Rommel's Afrika Korps in North Africa in 1941 made very real the danger of a Nazi German invasion of Palestine in early 1942. The Hagana set up the "Plan for the North" or "Masada Plan": women and children having been evacuated to Cyprus, the men of the entire *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine) would be concentrated in a huge, fortified locality, 200 square kms around Mount Carmel and Haifa, where they would continue for a long time the fight against the Germans. Guttman who belonged to the Hagana, asked himself: "What would the young adolescents do? I thought that they had to be socialized into being prepared for anything (particularly so) for independence and freedom. I said to myself: 'For this purpose, there is nothing better than Masada.... The guides will take the young adolescents there'" (Ben-Yehuda, *Sacrificing Truth*, pp. 63-64) – prefiguration of the pilgrimages of the Israeli Youth Movement, the *Gadna*, and of the swearing-in ceremony of young recruits, in particular those in the armoured divisions, proclaiming at dawn: "Masada will not fall again" (Y. Lamdan, "Masada" poem). Zionist ideology paralleled the physical effort and the challenge in reaching Masada with the difficulties in establishing a new Jewish homeland. To succeed was not easy, but possible. The mythical narrative spun by Guttman by manipulating Fl. Josephus' text (the *Sicarii* became the much less extremist Zealots, the En-Gedi massacre was erased, and the length of the siege extended) and the cognitive, physical and emotional experience (which Ben-Yehuda calls the "psychological Masada"), played a role of paramount importance in the creation of the Jewish, but secular, Israeli identity in the formative years of the new State.

This mythical and heroic narrative, however, required scientific credibility. After the topographic and archaeological recording of the ruins and the excavations of Herod's palace (1955), the excavation of one of the storerooms (1956), the reconstruction of one of the Roman camps, and the localisation of the "Snake's Path", Guttman succeeded in convincing Yigael Yadin, Chief-of-Staff turned archaeologist, that Masada could serve as a founding and integrative narrative for a nation of immigrants in the making, and as the link between past, present and future into a national and patriotic history uniting Israeli Jews of diverse origins and cultures.

Spurred by ideological and patriotic zeal into justifying the presence of the "People of the Book on the Land of the Book", but also by the hope of discovering *papyri* scrolls as at Nahal Hever, Yadin put the spade into Masada in October 1963, having already magnificently orchestrated an unprecedented media campaign. On the basis of an agreement with Yadin, the London *Observer* had exclusive rights on the publication of the discoveries (of which it provided the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv* and the Israeli radio *Kol Israel* with a few scraps for a fee). It published a recruitment call for excavation volunteers. Young and old, by thousands they flocked at their own expense from 28 countries for 11 months of fieldwork (October 1963-April 1964 and December 1964-March 1965). In collaboration with important Jewish and non-Jewish donors, the *Observer* also funded an impressive and intentionally short exhibition (23 November-15 December 1966) at a prestigious venue in London, the Royal Festival Hall, which brought in the crowds. For the first time, archaeological proof of daily life – oil-lamps, cosmetic utensils, textiles, remnants of food (dates, wheat, pomegranates) – and of Jewish religious life on *papyrus* scrolls (fragments of *Ecclesiasticus*, of the *Psalms* and of the Prophet Ezekiel) were "staged" against the backcloth of enormous photographs of the Judaeen Desert, of Masada overlooking the Dead Sea, of the daily excavation routine, of Herod's palace with its mosaic pavements and fragile frescoes, of the synagogue and ritual bath (*mikweh*), of storage jars, of silver *shekels* of the Revolt. Visitors were mesmerized and their imagination channelled towards tourism, and even better, immigration, El Al and the Israeli Tourist Board competing with each other with slogans and special offers. I was then 16, was about to read Near-eastern Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh, and when I visited Israel within the Green Line for the first time in 1969, images of the London exhibition stored in my mind, I listed Masada immediately after Jerusalem and Bethlehem as sites to visit ! When the Six Days' War erupted six months after the Masada exhibition, Israel – a small country hated and attacked by its Arab neighbours, as the "victim" cast itself - had already accumulated formidable support, thanks to the last stand of the "Masada besieged".

In his iconoclastic work, *Sacrificing Truth*, N.

Ben-Yehuda has carefully analyzed all the components of Yadin's deliberate mystification related not to the excavations themselves, but to the interpretation of the data collected in the course of the fieldwork: notably the 12 *ostraca* (inscribed pottery sherds) bearing names, including that of Ben-Yair, put forward as having been used to draw lots (Fl. Josephus, however, mentions ten and not 12 names); likewise, on the one hand, the disappearance of 960 bodies, and on the other, the discovery in the Cave of the Skeletons to the South of the site of 25 skeletons identified with Zealots who had committed suicide (glossing over the presence of pig bones, symbol of the Xth *Legio Fretensis*, pig sacrifice at funerals being a recognized Roman rite, which would indicate that the bodies belonged to Roman soldiers rather than to "Zealots"). Thus, the skeletons of the defenders of Masada who were given a State military funeral on 7 July 1969 conducted by the Chief Chaplain of the Israel Defence Forces, Rabbi Shlomo Goren, in the presence of Yadin and Menahem Begin, were most probably those of Roman soldiers!

In an article published in *Ma'ariv* on 16 April 1973 to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the end of Masada, Yadin wrote: "There is no doubt that for us as Jews, and not only as archaeologists, the most important discoveries are those of the last eight years of [the existence of] Masada...at the end of which Masada fell and became a symbol".

Before, during and after the "noise" engendered by the Masada excavations, other archaeologists less obsessed with "the search for and the elaboration of a link between the people and the land" (interview of Yadin in the army weekly *Bamahane*, 18 March 1969), were busy surveying and excavating.

"Measuring the land"

Since the creation of the State of Israel, the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums (IDAM) had pursued the work of the Department of Antiquities of the Mandatory Government of Palestine, limiting its zone of activity to Israel proper until 1967, when it was extended to include East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank (renamed Judaea and Samaria) and the Golan. 3,710 sites had been

listed as "ancient" between 1929 and 1947, localized thanks to a double set of geographical coordinates – the 26 sheets of the Survey of Western Palestine by British Royal Engineers published in 1881-1883, with alphabetical and numerical subdivisions, and the coordinates with six numbers according to the "Palestine Grid", which had been established during the Mandate by the Ordnance Survey of Palestine, and retained since 1948 by the Israel Geographical Survey.

After 1967, the Archaeological Archives (comprising the Excavation Archives and the Scientific Archives which bring up to date, thanks to periodically-repeated inspections of sites, the files concerning sites listed as "ancient") were enriched by data concerning Jerusalem, henceforth considered as a unit. The Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Golan were given separate archaeological archives within the context of the IDAM Office liaising with the military administration of these territories. Following the Golan's annexion by the State of Israel in 1982, the archives concerning the Golan were transferred to the Office of the Archaeological Archives of the State of Israel.

The Israel Archaeological Survey was founded in June 1964 and attached to IDAM. A century after the Survey of Western Palestine, its task was to undertake "the systematic archaeological survey of the State of Israel". Its first major enterprise was launched soon after the Six Days' War. The future of the West Bank and the Golan being then unforeseeable, their archaeological exploration by seven teams of two or three members, including two archaeologists, as well as the recording and dating of their sites, were urgent. The results of these explorations were published promptly. By localizing and measuring the archaeological remains still extant in villages which had been conquered or on their lands across the territories recently captured by Israel, these archaeologists who were neither religious, nor believers in the Greater Israel, were unconsciously participating in their ideological appropriation by mapping: let us remember Bonaparte's Expedition to Egypt and Jacotin's 1811 Map; or the (Colonial) Irish Ordnance Survey which fulfilled the need for accurate land measurement for valuation purposes by producing in 1842 maps of the entire country, the original Gaelic toponyms having been Anglicized .

Concurrently, Israel and the "Occupied Territories" (including Sinai) were gridded into 344 squares. Each 10 x 10 km square was assigned to a team of two, three or four surveyors, including two archaeologists, who drove by jeep from site to site, if sites were scattered. In areas dotted by numerous sites, the archaeologists and topographers progressed on foot, metre by metre, recording in a separate file each site identified by two sets of geographical coordinates, according to the "Palestine Grid" and the UTM (Universal Time Meridian) Grid. The handing back of Sinai by Israel to Egypt in 1980 according to the Peace Agreements, brought about the redeployment of the Israel defence Forces in the Negev Desert with, as corollary the threat of eradication of archaeological sites. Consequently, the Negev Emergency Survey, a vast enterprise of intensive and systematic surveys covering Southern Israel, was launched by the Israel Archaeological Survey. In the sole first year of work (1978-1979), 12 teams of topographers operating in jeeps from four bases, Beer Sheva, Sede Boqer, Mitzpe Ramon and Elat, recorded 1,300 new sites. At the same time, the surveys of the West Bank and of the Golan were updated by renewed explorations. It should be frankly and honestly admitted that if this work had not been conducted meticulously by these Israeli archaeologists, our archaeological knowledge of Palestine, the Golan and Sinai would have been poorer by thousands of sites. By detecting dozens of Beduin encampments coexisting with small farms from the Late Byzantine period to the Abbassid period, the quest by Israeli archaeologists for the most fleeting traces of anthropisation in the Central Negev in the area of the Mitzpe Ramon crater, revolutionized the scenario of the Moslem Conquest, the final act of a slow infiltration associated with semi-sedentarisation.

Of the established archaeologists (Y. Yadin continued to excavate Hazor, and later Bet She'an, Y. Aharoni launched a new project at Tel Masos in the Beersheva Basin, and M. Avi-Yonah put forward the hypothesis of workshops of mosaicists in Byzantine Gaza who produced on order pavements with similar motifs for the churches and synagogues of the hinterland), only B. Mazar and N. Avigad worked in the "occupied" territories, in the annexed Old City of Jerusalem. On the other hand, younger archaeologists were soon working in the Golan,

in Sinai and on the West Bank of the River Jordan, since "the return of the ancient environments to the bosom of the Motherland: Shiloh, Bethel, Sichem and Hebron" (according to Moshe Dayan) could not be solely a declaration of principles. In any case, in *Midrash Leviticus Rabbah* which dates to the Byzantine period, it is written: "The Most Holy, Blessed be He, considered all lands and found that no land was better as a gift to Israel than the Land of Israel. This is the meaning of the verse: 'He rose and measured the land' (*Habakkuk* 3: 6)".

Scientific or Nationalistic Archaeology?

In 1950, at the Annual general Meeting of the Israel Exploration Society (IES), founded in 1914 (since 1944 the AGMs attended by up to 3,000 members were symbolically held in the Autumn during the Feast of Sukkot and were the crucible in which was welded the national consciousness based on the creation of a common past), Ben-Gurion proclaimed: "The conquests of archaeology give a meaning to our past and materialize our historical continuity in this Land". However, with the end of the rooting process of the State of Israel marked by the Six Days' War which hastened the final fusion of the various components of the Israeli identity, the need which provided Ben-Gurion with the impulse to create a synthetic history linking modern Israel directly with Biblical Israel, vanished.

The gradual opening-out of Israeli archaeology is illustrated by three IES publications: the excavations conducted by B. Mazar and N. Avigad in the "reunited" Old City of Jerusalem were published in 1976 in *Jerusalem Revealed. Archaeology of the Holy City (1968-1974)*, edited by Y. Yadin. In 1981, *Ancient Synagogues Revealed* (ed. L.Y. Levine) was devoted to recent discoveries of numerous synagogues. Finally, in 1993, *Ancient Churches Revealed* (ed. Y. Tsafir) gathered together all the articles concerning churches, monasteries and other Christian sites which had been explored or excavated, previously published in Hebrew in the IES journal for the general public *Qadmoniot*, and translated into English. The systematic, architectural and photographic survey of the Byzantine monasteries of the Judaeen desert (many of which had been located by Father L. Féderlin of the White

Fathers of St Anne's of Jerusalem between 1902 and 1907, and studied by the Anglican Revd D.J. Chitty in the early 1960s) was not undertaken by Christian French or English archaeologists, but by young Jewish Israeli archaeologists fascinated by monachism, Y. Hirschfeld (who untimely passed away in 2006) and J. Patrich. The list of authors in the volumes devoted to updates of Christian archaeology in the Holy Land and published by the Franciscan Printing Press in Jerusalem, *Christian Archaeology in the Holy Land. New Discoveries* (eds G.C. Bottini, L. Di Segni and E. Alliata, Jerusalem 1990) and *Early Christianity in Context. Monuments and Documents* (eds F. Manns et E. Alliata, Jerusalem 1993) reflects the increasing interest in the late periods of Israeli scholars and wider public alike, Islamic archaeology, however, still being comparatively neglected. Some topics, however, still irritate. The harmonious coexistence of Jews and Christians which we brought to light in some settlements of the Byzantine Golan was vehemently denied, such a reaction partaking of the projection backwards into the Byzantine past of Palestine of a situation characteristic of rural Poland and Russia in the XIXth century and until WWII, when Jews and Christians lived in the same villages, but separately and in frequent conflict. As for the archaeological proofs (symbols and inscriptions carved in low relief on basalt blocks) of the presence of Jewish-Christians in Gaulanitis recorded during the surveys of our Golan Byzantine Expedition (1978-1988), the violence of the Israeli denials reached its acme in outrageous defamation in the French *Revue des Etudes Juives*, furthermore spread by the web.

In 1990, IDAM was replaced by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), a semi-autonomous organisation linked to the Ministry of Education and Culture, run by former top-ranking army personnel, who, closely copying the Israeli military command, divided the country into three Commands, North, Central and South. Three large-scale excavations, immediately followed by restoration, were launched with the aim of rapid opening to tourism: the health resort of Hammat Gader on the River Yarmuk on the border with Jordan and its Baths which were famous in the Roman world; Caesarea Maritima, founded by Herod

and capital of *Palaestina Prima*; and, Bet She'an, ancient Scythopolis, capital of *Palaestina Secunda*. The late *strata*, from the Arab Conquest to the Ottoman period, were carefully excavated, whilst in the Golan bulldozers were destroying the Syrian village of Qasrin in order to free the Byzantine synagogue from the surrounding "modern" housing, and the army was using the villages of Farj and Er-Ramthaniyye (abandoned by their Syrian inhabitants in 1967) with their important Roman and Byzantine remains, for shooting practice and training in street combat.

From the 1980s scientific archaeology, which was flourishing, was being overtaken by the search for "roots" in the West Bank, against the background of intensive colonisation by nationalistic, ultra right-wing groups of settlers who considered themselves to be the heirs of expansionist Zionism. The settlers (frequently American or French) were eager for proofs of "their" past on the patch of land which they had seized and illegally occupied. Only archaeology could provide such evidence. Thus, in the heart of mountainous Samaria, a Samaritan region in essence, lacking in Jewish "roots" except for the Proto-Biblical period, A. Zertal of the University of Haifa excavated a site typical of the the period of Israelite colonisation in the Early Iron Age I (ca 1250 BC), with in its centre an observation tower dated to a late phase of the site's occupation. He immediately identified it with the altar of roughly-hewn stones erected by Joshua on Mount Ebal for sacrifices to Yahweh (*Joshua* 8: 30-35). This discovery sent shock waves across Israel. The stubborn wish to link this geographical district with a fundamental theological theme of Israelite history, contributed to it becoming a news item whose importance was highly exaggerated, according to A. Kempinski, in relation to the original "vulgar heap of stones". From it developed a vicious polemic. To Kempinski's "As it sometimes happens in archaeology, the archaeologist found what he was looking for by identifying a tower with Joshua's mythological altar" (Kempinski, *Judaica* 1989, p. 19), Zertal replied with personal insults via the media, well beyond Kempinski's death in 1994.

More manipulative and thus potentially more dangerous than "settlers' archaeology" is research funded by institutions such as the City

of David Foundation whose objective is to prove the veracity of the Old Testament as a historical document, or the Shalem Center in Jerusalem, a "think tank" closely linked to the American Neo-Conservatives, whose proclaimed aim is to "strengthen the Jewish people and Israel by developing ideas to support Judaism and the Jewish State" (in 2006, Natan Sharansky joined the Shalem Center in order to create with the former Chief-of-Staff Moshe Ya'alon the Adelson Institute for Strategic Studies needed by Israel and the West...). In this dubious scientific context, Eilat Mazar (the granddaughter of B. Mazar who directed the Temple Mount excavations in Jerusalem) established in 2005 the Institute for the Archaeology of the Jewish People as part of the Shalem Center, and announced the uncovering to the South of the Old City of Jerusalem of a large stone structure of the XIth and Xth centuries BC, the time of Kings David and Salomon, which she interpreted as being David's Palace. Her colleagues, I. Finkelstein of the University of Tel-Aviv, and A. Mazar of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem denounced her dating (motivated by the conclusion which she was seeking) based on pottery. A. Mazar suggested that this structure could have been the Jebusite citadel conquered by David (thus linking up with the interpretation of the neighbouring "Stepped-stone structure" by Y. Shiloh of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who from 1978 to his death in 1987 excavated the City of David), whereas Finkelstein declared that the stones of Eilat Mazar's building should be dated to the IXth century, and were consequently post-Davidic and post-Salomonic.

Thus, healthily, vigilance did not die in 1994 with Aharon Kempinski, who created a storm in the Israeli and Palestinian archaeological community, when the Director of the IAA, the retired General Drori, launched "Operation Scrolls", code name for the excavations of Qarantal, North-West of Jericho, a few weeks before the area was handed back to the Palestinian Authority in keeping with the Oslo Agreements. Kempinski accused "Indiana Drori" of having hastily organized this excavation in order to retrieve for the benefit of Israel the maximum number of finds possible, before Israel evacuated the district.

So that archaeology is not outstripped by ideology, increased surveillance will have to be exercised by future generations of Israeli archaeologists trained by teachers such as the intentionally provocative Ze'ev Herzog of the University of Tel-Aviv: "Following 70 years of intensive excavations in the Land of Israel, archaeologists have found out: The Patriarchs' acts are legendary, the Israelites did not sojourn in Egypt, or make an exodus, they did not conquer the land. Neither is there any mention

of the empire of David and Salomon, nor of the source of belief in the God of Israel. These facts have been known for years, but Israel is a stubborn people and nobody wants to hear about it" (interview in *Ha'aretz*, 29 October 1999). "Anti-Israel and anti-Bible", even "anti-Semitic", as he was lampooned? Or, like his former colleague, Aharon Kempinski, the naughty, iconoclastic "child" essential to every country born out of an ideology?

Statement on the 59th anniversary of Al Nakbah

by Eyad Kishawi

Our struggle remains over: Asserting our right to return and live as equals on our land; Asserting the unitary identity of Palestinians; Asserting our right to struggle against imperialist domination and control over our own resources

Not over: A piece real-estate representing 11% or 19% or 21% of Palestine through a negotiated settlement,

Not over: It is not giving partial rights to some and taking away from others, as Palestine is not the West Bank, it is not Gaza, it is not East Jerusalem, nor is it some abstract spiritual dream in the heart of refugees. It is the whole geographic lot as well as collective temporal experience of the indigenous Arab peoples of the Levant.

It is not the removal of a wall or building of a new one,

It is not blaming Lebanon, Syria, Jordan or Egypt for absorbing the Palestinian refugees or not, but it is the responsibility of these regimes to facilitate the struggle of their own peoples as well as that of Palestinians in overthrowing colonial hegemony. In essence they ought to be blamed for impotence and conspiring against their peoples in presenting a first line of defense against the liberation effort.

Within this framework our struggle for shifting the balance of powers continues to be a struggle of narratives. On one hand Israel and the US, in collaboration with European forces have formed an imperialist project with the political aims to:

- Control land and cleanse it of its inhabitants, natural resources and human capital
- Control trade routes and flow of capital
- Control labor and modes of production
- And have asked us to assimilate their claims, not only as truths, but as rights. For instance, Israel has the right to kill, torture, arrest, demolishes homes, and continues to expel us from land occupied in 1948 until this very day. Any deviation from submission; any

ensuing resistance to Israel and the US brings about violence upon our communities of awesome proportions.

On the other hand, there is our narrative of steadfastness and struggle, manifested through simple, morally bound realities and experiences. It is in congruence with all movements that have conducted struggles for liberation:

- To assert our historic rights to live as free peoples, anywhere in Palestine, without restriction to movement, development or natural exercise of life
- To assert our right to return to Palestine, unconditionally, despite racist claims over demographic imbalance
- To assert our right to live as a sovereign indigenous people, in Arab Palestine, speaking our language, tilling our soil, harvesting our olives
- And finally, to defeat and eliminate the abhorrent exclusionary movement of Zionism. For Zionism claims Palestine is for Jews only and any discussion of rights must begin with our internalizing this Zionist principle, thus automatically self-negating.

Israel is a US/European aberration, militarily established in the heart of the Arab World, is the natural offspring of European anti-Semitism that led to fascism and Nazism. If you were alive in 1938, you should have been an anti-Nazi. In 2007, you must become an anti-Zionist. To assert that our falafel and hummus were stolen is to expose Israeli war trophies.

From this very dichotomy there arises an existentialist process – a very simple one – between oppressor and oppressed, between a tree that traces its roots to the turn of the second millennium (as most families have oral history that go back 800 years), and a logger that wants to strike at its trunk only to claim that there was a tree there two millennia ago. War for Israel is economically, politically and culturally important to maintain:

- Distinct identity from its surrounding

- Fear of the other to keep its exclusionary vision
- Political hegemony leading to economic control of resources through normalization and acceptance. Yesterday, while the killing fields are expanding in Gaza, Israeli firms announced a joint natural gas project with Egypt.

1948

The collision of narratives, embodied by Israel's wars, is deeply symbolized by the massacre of Deir Yassin. Manachem Begin, former prime minister of Israel, also a member of the Stern Gang, stated that Deir Yassin was a necessary action. The senseless killing of 250 people by Irgun gangs was quickly followed by announcements of mutilation, rape and atrocities. Then there was Qibya commanded by Ariel Sharon and especially designed to be an example. Then there was Ein al Hilweh, Nahl Al Bared I and II, Qana, Jenin and of course Sabra and Shatilla. Over 100,000 Palestinians were killed by direct military action on the hands of Israel since its inception.

Israel uses massacres to assault [NN]:

- Palestinian sense of honor by mutilating and exposing our bodies;
- Assault absolute bond to the land, and transform it into a pragmatic choice;
- And assault most obviously, Palestinian National Identity, by materializing hegemony through the barrel of a gun.

Israeli massacre of Sabra and Shatilla in 1982 in Lebanon were reported by journalists world-wide, but was censored in the US, and intentionally editorialized. A Japanese journalist reported:

"I arrived at the garden of a house where I found all members of a family massacred. It looked as if a bulldozer had attempted to hide the corpses. A dead body of a child of about two years old was thrown besides the rubble. I imagined that it was alive until the very end, as the corpse was not hidden under the bulldozed rubble by the killers.

"In the next alley I found the bodies of two more children, a girl and a boy, both around 5 years of age. Near them a woman's body, probably their mother, was covered with the rubble by a bulldozer. The rubble did not

completely cover her and some parts of her body could be seen. The girl was wearing a toy earring. The boy was wearing a something like a chain around his neck. He seemed to have been choked by that chain as his neck seemed to have swollen with congested blood.

On the 20th anniversary of the massacre, NPR reported a disputed figure of 300 Palestinians were killed. 4,500 perished on the hands of Israel and its proxy militias that the US is funding again today after its resounding defeat in the Lebanese civil war.

The psychological war is also propagated by the very renaming of our villages. By the time Israel was created, and shortly thereafter, 480 Palestinian cities and villages were destroyed and 2/3 (700k) of our population was displaced. Israel's founders consulted archeologists to provide biblical names to cities, but Israeli political leaders thought they would create a more organic presence by Hebrewizing the Arab names.

Moshe Dyan, address to Technion in 1969:

- "Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You do not even know the names of these Arab villages, and I do not blame you because geography books no longer exist. Not only do the books not exist, the Arab villages are not there either. Nahlal arose in the place of Mahlul; Kibbutz Gvat in the place of Jibta; Kibbutz Sarid in the place of Juneifis; and Kefar Yehushua in the place of Tal al-Shuman. There is not a single place built in this country that did not have a former Arab population."

1967

In today's exchange of ideas, we are constantly hunted down and pursued by Israeli dialog groups, stating they want peace just like us. They tell us that both Israelis and Palestinians are traumatized. Michael Lerner of Tikkun, a Zionist apologist, stated in a recent article in Tikkun that Israeli actions in the 1967 war were understandable since in his life time, 1/3 Jews were killed. He of course proceeded to perpetrate Zionist creation myths by stating that we were occupied by Jordan and Egypt and yet we do not condemn the Egyptians and Jordanians for our prior occupation. The 6-day war, he argued was an existentialist war by a

group of people suffering from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Because he is a peace-loving person, he also acknowledges that Israel's justified actions resulted in similar PTSD among the Palestinians. He then proceeded to attack our actions of resistance against Israel as undermining his peace movement and that we brought the wrath of the US and Israeli right-wing upon ourselves. After he specifically assaults the anti-war movement, our activist institutions including Pacifica and KPFA for "demeaning Israel", he concludes that healing and peace must be accomplished by assuming a position of parity and compassion for the other.

A historical account of the 1967 war is simple. It is an attempt to expand the Israeli colonial project and succeeded in occupying and subjugating 3.3 million people for 40 years. Gaza experiences daily helicopter and F-16 attacks. Israel mastered the art of political assassinations by shooting at us as if we were ducks in a large cage. Nablus is destroyed. Over the past 20 years Jerusalem residents have been under enormous pressure by settlers and are getting slowly expelled prior to discussions of "final solutions."

How do you shift political objectives of an occupied people? You take something, then you shift the ceiling of the discussion prior to giving it back. When they took Palestine, Golda Meir said we did not exist. We then asserted ourselves through PLO institutions and ensuing resistance. Yitzhach Rabin acknowledged our existence and Shimon Perez said that he wanted to maintain the character of his state and the character of his Knesset. Then they took the West Bank and Gaza and agreed to give us Bantustans. Now they constructed a wall, and from here there has emerged an alternative Palestinian narrative, a narrative of defeat.

Mahmud Abbass says attacks on Israel are reckless and adventurous, though they are

designed to apply pressure on the Israeli government to stop the daily killings. He told us by stopping our actions and watching our families die every day, we then put the ball in the Israeli court. The Saudi and Egyptians claimed that Hizb Allah was also adventurous in stemming the daily Israeli trespasses onto the Lebanese people. Now we find in this new discourse of terror, that proxy militias no longer fight for the imperialist, but they are born to fight against them in our name. Such is the example of Fath Al Islam, a rag-tag gang funded by Saa'd Harriri and US proxies, to attack the Lebanese army in our name.

The US and Israel want us to internalize their narrative, their history, and pro Zionist normalizers such as Michael Lerner wants us to rewrite our textbooks. Their imperialist assault on Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan and now Iran is creating its own antithesis. Our movements are going through a painful renaissance leading to a new Middle-East, the exact opposite of Condoleezza's New Middle East. Palestinian work for return, carry the legacy of Dalal al Moughrabi, Leila Khalid, and Mohammad Mahmud El Aswad.

I would like to end with this conception. Imperialists have a project. Different forces within this project dialectically contradict, struggle and argue to make it more efficient. The span includes Richard Perle, Hillary Clinton and Michael Lerner. Sometimes it expands, and other times it consolidates. When it expands, our movements react by stepping up the struggle.

We need a project like theirs. We need to transform our transnational solidarity with the indigenous peoples of the Americas, Venezuela, Cuba, Iran to an internationalist project of counterweight. Similar to the British, French and Roman empires, the US Empire can provide a framework for us to exchange our struggles, our narratives and internalize resistance.

In order pay homage to Pierre Lambert, Editor in Chief of Dialogue Review who passed away last January 16th, we propose to our readers an article written by our comrade and published in November 2002 in the second issue of the review. Every one will be able to grasp how relevant the article was to the present situation; the analysis and prospects it gave are quite related to the discussion that prepares the Madrid Conference.

Charles Enderlin, "Shattered Dreams: the Failure of the Peace Process in the Middle East, 1995-20021"

by Pierre Lambert

We feel we must present this book by Charles Enderlin, Israeli journalist and correspondent for France 2. Of course, I alone am responsible for the choice of subheads, quotations, and political comments.

This is a book the objectives of which one can discuss, as we do, but only by bringing in some serious information. We are careful in using this information not to attribute to the author points of view that are not his. The aim of this article, using this information, is to contribute to the search for a positive outcome to the horrific drama that continues to unfold in Palestine.

For my part, the genuine solution is to convene a Palestinian constituent assembly to create a single state on all the historic territory of Palestine, with equal rights for all, including Jews, Arabs, and Druze — which implies the right to return. Others call for the constitution of two states (and that is Charles Enderlin's position). But whatever position one takes, no one should accept the continuing massacres ordered by the Sharon government, massacres that are an affront to what has been a contribution of Jews to human civilization - namely the struggle for democracy, equality, and political emancipation.

These traditions are expressed, for example, in the letter of a young Israeli who refused his induction into the army:

"Today, this 23rd of October 2002, I will be led to a military prison a consequence of my

political opinions, which keep me from joining the Israeli armed forces. Despite my youth — I am hardly 18 years old and thus have no personal memory of the past — I can declare without reservation that the state of Israel has reached its low point.

"The suppression of all critical thought, the total acceptance of the crimes of the army, the unconditional admiration for the army, and the gradual acceptance of the principle of 'ethnic cleansing' are but expressions of the collapse of our society ... I refuse to cooperate with all of that.

"The voice of conscience and the lessons that humankind should draw from many similar situations of the past leave me no other choice but to refuse induction into the Israeli army. The oppression suffered by the people of this region in the time of the colonial empires, the suffering of the slaves and Indians in North America, the war of independence in Algeria, apartheid in South Africa — these are all precedents that make my refusal necessary. The acts of my grandfather during the Second World War in his fight against Nazism, and his belief in humanism, are also elements that lead me to this refusal. In my family, I learned about oppression and justice.

"Confronted with what occurs here and now, I see no other way."

Charles Enderlin begins his book with these words: "I stated my intention, with the

publication of my work titled *Paix ou guerre: les secrets des négociations Israélo-arabes 1997-1999*, to write about the continuation of the peace process from 1995 to 2000.” After indicating that he thought “the negotiations would end in failure,” Enderlin continues:

“Didn’t the gap widen each day between the reality on the ground and what the negotiations were saying? In the Gaza and West Bank refugee camps, in the cities under development in Israel (the Israeli cities where Arabs live), I repeatedly heard that life had grown more difficult since 1966. If they want to make peace, why do they keep building settlements on our territory? Why, the Palestinians asked me, do we have to pass through so many military checkpoints? The Israelis asked in return: why do they attack our homes, since we’ve been willing to sign an agreement and evacuate some settlements?”

But there is another question to pose: why should hundreds of thousands, indeed millions, of Palestinians, accept a proposal (and ineffectual at that) that the Israelis evacuate “some” settlements built on the expropriation of “territory owned by the Palestinian Arabs”?

What is the real content of the two-state solution?

To answer this question, let us allow Charles Enderlin to speak. In my opinion, the information he provides illustrates perfectly the issue of the settlements, which imparts the practical content of Israeli policy.

— “In 1995, the Jewish settlements made real great strides. Their population rose from 105,940 colonists in 1992 to 151,324 in June 1996. The number of Israelis living in the new Jewish quarters built in the occupied territories then reached to 200,000 an increase of 50,000.”

It is often more or less suggested that members of the Labour Party would have a more flexible policy than that of Likud. But what are the facts?

— The Labour Party loses the elections. The right forms the government and Netanyahu (of Likud) became prime minister. On July 23, “Netanyahu sends David Levy, his foreign minister, to meet officially with Arafat. The

conversation proceeds as the siege of Erez unfolds and with the incursion into the Gaza Strip. The two men's long handshake delights the television networks and the Israeli left ... ‘I never imagined when I launched the Oslo process that I would see David Levy shake the hand of Arafat,’ exclaims Yossi Beilin.” Indeed.

— On July 19, north of Ramallah, hundreds of Palestinians demonstrate against the seizure of 40 hectares of arable land by the Israeli army. The inhabitants of Samua, near Hebron, are placed under curfew, accused of having sabotaged the machines used by Israeli contractors for construction of a bypass road that must pass on their land. Ten days later, Avigdor Lieberman, the minister of national infrastructures, announces a new program aimed at jump-starting the economy in the settlements.

“... the chief orchestrator of this policy is none other than Ariel Sharon. The minister for national infrastructures lays out a budget of more than \$500 million...”

“The new government intends to augment by 50,000 inhabitants in four years the Jewish population in the occupied territories.”

— In 1999, Barak (Labour) becomes prime minister. On September 16, 1999, Arafat names Yasser Abed Rabbo, the Palestinian minister of information, to head the delegation to the final status negotiations. “Ehud Barak receives a report from the Ministry of Defense about 42 new settlements created in the West Bank without authorization. According to experts, ten of them are ‘illegal’ and an eleventh is right in the field of fire. The Israeli prime minister manages to strike an agreement with the settlements council. Thirty will be ‘legalized’ and receive a building permit within the framework of existing development laws, and the others will be evacuated. But the young militants of the colonization movement accept no compromise: they promise that they will resist any evacuation. The left within the Barak government protests tamely against the creation of new settlements.”

“From the time it comes to power until the end of December 1999, the Barak government issued 3,196 building permits in the settlements. In response to protests from Palestinians and the

Israeli left, the [Labour] prime minister responds: 'They are commitments made by the preceding government. If we cancel them, we risk being dragged before the Supreme Court. Once we conclude the final status accord, everything will be back to normal'."

— "... secret negotiations take place in tandem with the official talks ... the discussion relates to the future of the settlements. Gilead Sher and Shlomo Ben-Ami, the minister of public security, are present, meeting with Abu Ala'a and Hassan Asfour. The next day, another secret meeting takes place in the lodge of a kibbutz near Jerusalem. [American envoy] Dennis Ross and Robert Malley, assistant to the national security advisor [Sandy Burger], then counselor to the president for Israeli-Arab affairs, facilitate. Abu Ala'a presents his position on the question of the refugees and Jerusalem: 'First, it is necessary that the solution be based on UN Resolution 194, and then we can establish a joint commission of Israelis and Palestinians, with the participation of representatives of the United States, Canada, Europe, and Japan, as well as the countries that have taken in the refugees'."

It should be noted that in seeking a solution to the impasse, the Americans admit that it will be necessary for them to take part in installing what is already referred to as an armed "interdiction force" with a clearly outlined objective: "This commission will prepare a questionnaire to be submitted to the refugees, but the questions should be written in such a way that a minority answer that they wish to return to Israel. ... The Americans are satisfied. A genuine negotiation begins." Cynicism has no bounds.

"He has no choice"

On March 30, 1996, the Israeli generals presented a plan to Labour Prime Minister Shimon Peres for a vast military operation called "The Grapes of Wrath."

— "Very quickly, Peres realizes that he has no choice. If he rejects the plan of the general staff, a certain general will make sure to leak to the press that the prime minister put the country's security on a secondary level, and that he does not live up to his responsibilities. ... Operation 'Grapes of Wrath' thus is launched on April 11, 1996. The massive bombardment of south

Lebanon begins. Tsahal2 issues a call to the inhabitants of 49 villages to leave their homes quickly. Some 200,000 refugees flee the area.

"... In Beirut, combat helicopters equipped with laser-guided bombs attack several Hezbollah command centers. The first snag comes two days later: a helicopter destroys a Lebanese ambulance, killing four children and two women. Despite everything, Peres decides to continue the operation until its objectives are achieved. On April 16, Tsahal, which has failed to bring a halt to the daily shooting of rockets into Israeli territory, attacks the Beirut International Airport."

"On April 18, Israeli shells hit a base of the 'Blue Helmets' in Kfarkana, where many Lebanese civilians have taken refuge. It is a real bloodbath: 102 people are killed, including women and children. Tsahal and the Israeli government issue their regrets and excuses, explaining that it was an error."

We know, today even more than ever, the value of these "excuses." But whatever team is in power, the Israeli state demonstrates by the facts that it has no choice other than to organize, month after month and year after year, operations like "Grapes of Wrath" with all their "snags." That is because, for Israel and the United States, any Palestinian state constituted would have to be, at best, a rump state.

Are we exaggerating? Let us return to Charles Enderlin's book:

— "On July 9, Bill Clinton meets with Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House. ... At the end of their meeting, the two men affirm that they agree that the principle of 'peace through security' is the best formula for arriving at peace in the Middle East. Clinton does not mention on this occasion that the fundamental principle worked out at the time of the Oslo process: 'the territories for peace.' A White House spokesman nevertheless had declared a few hours earlier that the American administration always considered this principle to constitute the basis for negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

"Upon his return to Jerusalem, the Israeli prime minister would say during a televised interview: 'I presented to President Clinton and the

members of Congress the statistics regarding an increase in the Jewish population in Judea-Samaria and in Gaza. It is 50%. That happened under a Labour government, not under Likud [ed. note: Netanyahu's own emphasis]. It is the result of a national development'."

The extent of the debate was thus established by the following declaration of Netanyahu, at the moment when he became prime minister after the Labour Party lost the elections:

"Do not give credence to any of the arguments put forth by the Israeli left [ed. note: which we have seen shares the fundamental objectives of the Israeli right] that a Palestinian state would be demilitarized and its airspace controlled by Israel." Charles Enderlin adds: "Netanyahu does not believe that it will be possible to allow the return of two to three million refugees to Israeli territory ... Netanyahu states publicly at the time of the Likud central committee meeting: 'There will never be a Palestinian state between the Mediterranean and the Jordan'."

Imperialism is responsible

There are many developments we could elaborate upon based on information provided in Enderlin's book. We would like to present some of the elements that allow us to establish the position occupied by the United States in this catastrophic "game" that affects so many people.

In response to the question "Which American solution," here is some of what we learn:³

— "On December 23, 2000 ... at the White House, Clinton presents his final proposal to the Israelis and the Palestinians ...:

"... 'The Parties also should consider the swap of leased land to meet their respective needs. The Parties should develop a map consistent with the following criteria: 80% of settlers in blocks; contiguity [of the territory]. Minimize [the number of] annexed areas. Minimize the number of Palestinians affected'. (A minimal number of Palestinians would, for Clinton, find themselves in zones annexed by Israel.)

Security: according to Clinton's proposal, "the key lies in an international presence ... This presence will also monitor the implementation

of the agreement between both sides." Hence, an "interdiction force" that is, an occupation by the American armed forces, either directly or under their control, aimed at assuring the U.S. seizure of the world, of every continent.

Clinton continues: "... On airspace, I suggest that the state of Palestine will have sovereignty over its airspace but that the two sides should work out special arrangements for Israeli training and operational [aviation] needs.

"I understand that the Israeli position is that Palestine should be defined as a 'demilitarized state' while the Palestinian side proposes 'a state with limited arms.' As a compromise, I suggest calling it a 'non-militarized state'." We should understand that this means not a "Palestinian state" but a rump state, absent the attributes of sovereignty.

Clinton continues: "This would be consistent with the fact that in addition to a strong Palestinian security force, Palestine will have an international force for border security and deterrent purposes." As always, the objective in every domain is to preserve above all the interests of American imperialism, to the detriment of the people.

Concerning the refugees — that is, the millions of Palestinians expelled from their villages — Clinton declares: "I have a sense that the differences are more relating to formulations and less to what will happen on a practical level. I believe that Israel is ready to acknowledge the moral and material suffering caused to the Palestinian people as a result of the 1948 war and the need to assist the international community in addressing the problem."

Act I: Good Sentiments.

Act II: "... The United States is prepared to lead an international effort to help the refugees.

"The fundamental gap is on how to handle the concept of the right of return. I know the history of the issue and how hard it will be for the Palestinian leadership to appear to be abandoning this principle."

Act III: Require "the Palestinian leadership" to abandon the "right of return." "The Israeli side

could not accept any reference to the right of return that would imply a right to immigrate to Israel in defiance of Israel's sovereign policies and [immigrant] admission or that would threaten the Jewish character of the state.

“Any solution must address both needs”

Act IV: Clinton requires: “The solution will have to be consistent with the two-state approach that both sides have accepted as a way to end the Palestinian-Israeli conflict: the state of Palestine as the homeland of the Palestinian people and the state of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people.

“Under the two-state solution, the guiding principle should be that the Palestinian state would be the focal point for the Palestinians who choose to return to the area without ruling out that Israel will accept some of these refugees.” (“Some”!!!)

Act V: Require the abandonment of the right of return. “Palestinians, rot in the camps!”

“I believe that we need to adopt a formulation on the right of return that will make clear that there is no specific right of return to Israel itself but that does not negate the aspiration of the Palestinian people to return to the area.

“In light of the above, I propose two alternatives:

“1. Both sides recognize the right of Palestinian refugees to return to historical Palestine.

“2. Both sides recognize the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland.

“The agreement will define the implementation of this general right in a way that is consistent

with the two-state solution. It would list the five possible homes for the refugees4 ...”

Clearly, the two-state solution is completely contradictory with the second alternative. States Clinton:

“In listing these options, the agreement will make clear that the return to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and areas acquired in the land swap would be the right of all Palestinian refugees, while rehabilitation in host countries, resettlement in third countries, and absorption into Israel will depend upon the [immigration] policies of those countries.

“Israel could indicate in the agreement that it intends to establish a policy so that some of the refugees would be absorbed into Israel consistent with Israel’s sovereign decision.”

Which observations might we draw as a tentative conclusion?

Clearly, this is not to affirm a partisan point of view that there is no way around the “two-state solution” which issues directly from the will of the U.S. government.

Is there another way?

In their dialogue in this magazine, is it not the case that the Arab and Jewish militants from Palestine show that there is a way out?

Don't they show that it is possible — despite the innumerable difficulties along the way to chart a positive perspective that states that the Arab and Jewish workers of Palestine can live with complete equality on the same territory, in the same state?

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

1 Translator’s Note: This review is of the original French-language publication of this book, under the title *Le rêve brisé: Histoire de l'échec du processus de paix au Proche-orient, 1995-2002* (Paris: Fayard, 2002).

Other Press (New York) is slated to publish the English-language version in February 2003 under the title used at the head of this review. Hence, without the “official” translation yet available, the quotations from the book here are translations by Dialogue magazine from the French.

2 Translator 's Note: This is the Hebrew word for the Israeli Defense Forces.

3 Translator's Note: The quotes from Clinton are from a document (referred to as "minutes") widely available on the World Wide Web. For instance, they may be found at the website of the Israeli newspaper Ha 'aretz, prefaced with this statement: "Following are the minutes of U.S. President Bill Clinton's comments at a meeting with Israeli and Palestinian representatives at the White House on December 23, 2000, as given to Ha 'aretz by Palestinian sources." (See <http://www.haaretz.co.il/special/neg o-e/f/346683.asp>)

4 Translator's Note: The document lists as the "five possible homes" the following: 1) The state of Palestine; 2) Areas in Israel being transferred to Palestine in the land swap; 3) Rehabilitation in host country; 4) Resettlement in third country; 5) Admission to Israel."

DIALOGUE

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END OF TERM REPORT PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH, ARABIC, HEBREW AND FRENCH

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